

OPPORTUNITY

The Newsletter of the Idaho State Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Dedicated to making Idaho a place where persons of all ages who are deaf or hard of hearing have an equal opportunity to participate fully as active, productive and independent citizens.

Winter 2006

Idaho Educational Interpreter Act Becomes Law

On March 23, 2006, Governor Dirk Kempthorne signed the Idaho Educational Interpreter Act into law. The bill successfully made it through legislature by a vote of 91/4. The law requires K-12 educational Sign Language, Oral, and Cued Speech interpreters and transliterators to pass a minimum competency test. There are emergency authorization clauses built into the language so that interpreters and districts have sufficient time to meet the standards. To read a copy of the law, go to <http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/S1316.html>. Senator Michael Jorgenson sponsored the Bill in the Senate and Representative Donna Pence in the House. Thirty organizations and agencies officially endorsed the legislation. Dozens of people came to the committee meetings to testify in support of the bill and show their support.

As a member of the Educational Interpreter Interagency Consortium (EIIC), the Council has sent out a document to all known K-12 interpreters and special education directors that explains the legislation, outlines free statewide resources, and provides contact information. Under Jo Ann Shopbell's direction, the EIIC will continue to work hard to provide training opportunities throughout the state as we go through this important transition.

What Has Happened So Far?

01-26-06: Senate Education Committee unanimously voted to print the Bill 9/0.
02-08-06: Senate Education Committee unanimously voted to pass the Bill 9/0.
02-10-06: Bill had 2nd reading on the Senate Floor.
02-17-06: Bill had 3rd reading and debate on Senate Floor. Senate passed it 35/0.
03-01-06: House Education Committee unanimously voted to pass the Bill 17/0.
03-03-06: Bill had 2nd reading on the House Floor.
03-15-06: Bill had 3rd reading and debate on House Floor. House passed it 56/4.
03-23-06: Governor signed the bill and it became a law.

When Will the Law Actually Take Effect?

The law will be in effect on July 1st of 2006. However, the initial grace period is in effect until July 1st of 2009, almost 3 ½ years from now. This means that interpreters who are currently employed in Idaho will have sufficient time to pass an appropriate competency test. Interpreters who graduate from an interpreter training program have a year to meet the standard. After July 1st of 2009, interpreters who were not employed when the law went into effect have the opportunity to seek three-year emergency authorization.



From Our Executive Director

Many exciting events and changes are taking place at CDHH. In addition, deaf and hard-of-hearing issues are receiving a lot of attention in the legislature, community, and media lately. This is a great time to become politically involved and make your views known. Some of the statewide changes that are happening now will influence our community for many years to come.

Remember, if you are a deaf or hard-of-hearing person, or are the parent of a deaf or hard-of-hearing child, CDHH is your advocate. This agency was created to coordinate state-level services. If you have ideas, concerns, questions, or just want to talk about an issue, please contact us so we can appropriately help you.

As one wise deaf constituent recently told me, "deaf and hard-of-hearing people come from many different tribes, but we are all in the same nation, so we need to work together for our common interests." CDHH agrees. We don't care what language you sign or speak, or how you were raised, or what your education or communication philosophies are. This is why our statute requires that Board members come from various walks of life. There are diverse perspectives on the Council that enable us to serve all deaf and hard of hearing people.

Sometimes our constituents ask us to advocate for issues that are in direct conflict with each other. For example, some deaf people want the school in Gooding to remain open while other deaf people want it to close and for all the students to be mainstreamed. These types of philosophies are sometimes difficult if not impossible to reconcile. Consequently, because CDHH serves such a diverse population of people, we negotiate, compromise, and sometimes find a middle ground when we develop official position statements on these sensitive issues. While these issues are often very personal and emotional for individuals and families, we work hard to make sure all our constituents' views around the state are taken into consideration when we take a position, including the views of those who are not experienced at publicly advocating for themselves and articulating their positions. We are working hard to increase our staff and resources so that we can become more effective in advocating for you and coordinating state-level resources.

Every year, the Council establishes a few major priorities for the Executive Director, Board, and staff to accomplish. One of the priorities this year is increasing the quality of educational interpreters. The article entitled "Idaho Educational Interpreter Act" in this newsletter outlines the progress of this undertaking.

Another priority this year is to identify and serve more hard-of-hearing children in the public schools. The State Department of Education recently awarded a grant designed to increase regional audiology services in public schools. Only about 25% of Idaho's K-12 students have access to a staff audiologist. Dr. Ron Schow, of ISU and the CDHH board, found through a study that districts with staff audiologists identified and served 4-5 times more hard-of-hearing students than districts without a staff audiologist. CDHH, ISDB, ISU, and the SDE are working together on this project to ensure that more hard-of-hearing students are identified and served in our public schools.

Lastly, the third major priority this year is increasing public awareness of deaf and hard-of-hearing issues. The following are some of the projects we have worked on over the past few months:

- Creation of a new Web site – to be launched on April 1st
- Publication and distribution of new brochures and posters – complete
- IPUL / ISDB / CDHH partnership project mailing campaign to parents – complete
- ASL course for Meridian school district teachers – complete
- Conversion to e-newsletters for wider distribution – complete
- Help & Hope Resource Guide update to include latest resources – complete
- Creation of a VR-brochure for potential employers of deaf and hard-of-hearing – complete
- Creation of database of over 1,000 people for regular information distribution – complete
- Creation of a statewide deaf and hard-of-hearing phone directory – in progress
- Participation and support of Boise Valley SHHH and Idaho AG Bell chapters – in progress
- Outreach to our agency partners and the Consortium of Idahoans with Disabilities – in progress
- Interviews with media outlets to explain CDHH's position on current issues – in progress
- Presentations and workshops at various institutions – in progress
- City Council advocacy for the northern Idaho deaf center – in progress

Feel free to contact us anytime with your ideas!

-Wes Maynard

HAMILTON RELAY

Hamilton Relay Continues Surge in Growth

Aurora, NE – Hamilton Relay continues to grow. Hamilton recently acquired three new contracts to operate the relay services: the States of Georgia and Montana as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands. Hamilton also recently received consecutive contract awards in Kentucky and Idaho as well as contract renewals in the States of Nebraska and Louisiana.

“We are honored to continue to provide relay for the states in which we have served for many years,” comments Dixie Ziegler, Vice President of Hamilton Relay. “To have an opportunity to begin servicing citizens in the Virgin Islands, Georgia and Montana is very exciting. As we move into the new year, we will continue to focus on providing excellent customer service and designing products and services that meet the needs of our customers.”

About Hamilton Relay

Hamilton Relay provides traditional relay services to nine states, the District of Columbia, the Island of Saipan and the Virgin Islands. Hamilton offers a variety of additional relay services to further enhance relay communication including Internet Relay, Video Relay, Wireless Relay and Cap Tel. Information about all of Hamilton’s Relay services is available at www.hamiltonrelay.com

The Views of a Communication Assistant

As a Communication Assistant (CA), it is my job to relay telephone conversations between a deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled person and hearing people without intervening. I know I am performing a job that truly makes a difference for the deaf, hard of hearing and speech disabled community. I feel great about my job because I know relay allows two parties to communicate effectively.

You may think that my job is simple: however, relaying a call includes following exact procedures for introducing the call, understanding and using the right technology to connect both parties, and repeating exactly what is being said by voicing and/or typing.

There are some calls in which either or both parties get frustrated and it is difficult because I cannot intervene to help facilitate the call. On other calls, the conversation flows in rhythm between the two parties. On any given day, I relay many calls with different communication styles. Everyday is something new which makes working as a CA challenging and interesting

As a Hamilton CA, I am very proud to serve you on your calls with very high standards because we care. We know how important your calls are and we do our best to make them as smooth and efficient as possible.



IDAHO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Mary Dunne ISDB Outreach Coordinator

The purpose of the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind is to provide effective supplemental services, information, and resources to Lead Education Agencies and families throughout Idaho. ISDB provides a continuum of educational opportunities designed to meet the needs of children, families, and service delivery partners.

In response to current technology, desired student outcomes, and existing resources, ISDB has partnered with local school districts in the Treasure Valley to provide a high level of support to early childhood students in a program located at River Valley Elementary in Meridian. The unique program at River Valley combines the resources and expertise of AG Bell, ISDB and Meridian School District staff, as follows:

ISDB Staff:

- 3 Outreach Teachers of the Deaf
- 2 ½ Instructional Aides
- part-time Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- auditory-oral Consultant/SLP

River Valley/Meridian School District Staff

- Principal
- SLP
- 4 Classroom Teachers
- Numerous support personnel

AG Bell Program Assistance Mentors provide in service training for all staff, as determined appropriate

ISDB delivers monitoring, consultation, or direct services through its Outreach Program to other students mainstreamed in LEAs throughout Idaho and at its Day/Residential campus in Gooding.

For more information about the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind, contact Sharon Brooks at (208) 934-4457.

Demonstration and Loan Center Updates

UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY OF IDAHO

Lynn Cundick, Executive Director

United Cerebral Palsy of Idaho is pleased to work with the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to assist those who have hearing challenges living in Idaho. Many lives have been improved as individuals and families have been able to improve communication with the aid of special telephones and devices that improve hearing capabilities. As the result of a Grant from Governor Kempthorne's Generation of a Child Program, funding for 2006 has doubled and is still barely enough to meet the need.

Some of the devices available include telephones which not only amplify sound but also make it clearer, TTY telephones, telephones with large windows so text can be read, and devices that allow a person to amplify television or radio programs without causing discomfort to others in the household. UCP of Idaho looks forward to assisting many more clients to experience the joys of improved communication.

❖ As of December 2005 the following equipment has been subsidized:

➤ TTY's	66
➤ Amplified Phones	68
➤ VCO Phones	15
➤ Sound Wizard	1
➤ TV Listening System	2
➤ Smoke Detector	4
➤ Clock	1
➤ Alertmaster	19
➤ Pocket Talker	5
➤ Krown Speak and Read	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	184



Applications approved by Demonstration Center

▪ Boise (UCP)	63
▪ Coeur D'Alene (DAC)	29
▪ Moscow (DAC)	14
▪ Idaho Falls (LIFE)	27
▪ Burley (LIFE)	4
▪ Pocatello (LIFE)	1
▪ Twin Falls (LINC)	35
▪ Idaho State University	9
▪ Caldwell	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	184

IDAHO SOUND BEGINNINGS

Cynthia Carlin, Administrative Assistant

Idaho Sound Beginnings has had a busy and eventful year; beginning with the exciting news that our EHDI grant was extended through March of 2008. The focus for this three year extended grant period is to:

- Expand the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening program to assure that babies born at home, or at birthing centers receive a hearing screening before the age of one month.
- Assure that 95% of the babies who need a second stage (follow-up) screen receive that screen, and
- Assure that babies who are identified with hearing loss receive the appropriate medical and early intervention services.



Activities for the past year have focused on establishing relationships with professionals who provide birthing services outside hospitals, continuing to educate nurses and other health professionals, and actively expanding our health promotions efforts to the general public. Health promotions and education activities have included educational booths at: the Boise YMCA Healthy Kids Day, the Hispanic Health Fair (Nampa), the Idaho Academy of Family Physicians annual conference, The Idaho Medical Association annual conference, and the Idaho Perinatal project's annual Breastfeeding Conference. Each of these venues provided unique opportunities for Sound Beginnings staff to

interact, educate, and inform everyone from parents and grandparents to physicians, nurses, midwives and other medical personnel. If you know of any health promotions activities being planned for your region, hospital, or community, let us know! Community events and health fairs, hospital events, and regional workshops – all of these provide opportunities to educate and inform consumers and professionals about newborn hearing screening – what it is, how it works, why it's important, where to find more information and materials, and most importantly- where can babies be screened in Idaho.

Our 2005 Annual Roundtable meeting at the Idaho Hospital Association Convention in Sun Valley was a highlight of the year, featuring guest speaker Anne Spencer, MS, CGC, certified genetics counselor for the State of Idaho, with a well-received presentation on genetics and hearing loss.

The importance of Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention was also promoted on local Boise area TV when Idaho Sound Beginnings, along with Elks Audiologists provided the background, screening demonstrations, and several interviews with weatherman, Larry Gebert, from KTVB Channel 7.



EHDI has published an update to the state resources for Help and Hope. If you would like the update, please contact us.



Announcements!

Do you want to be a CDHH Board member?

Board members are appointed by the Governor to play an active role in fulfilling the mission of CDHH.

CDHH is going through many exciting changes. If you are interested in sharing your expertise and experience, and fit into one of the four categories below, please contact Wes Maynard at maynardw@idhw.state.id.us for an application. The announcement closes on March 10, 2006.

Pending Position Vacancies:

1. Audiologist
2. Interpreter

As board members' terms expire, or as they pursue other interests, the following positions will become vacant over the next months/years, and will be regularly rotated:

*Deaf Person Representing an Association of the Deaf

*Parent of a Child who is Deaf

*Physician

CDHH is currently gathering names and phone numbers for a Deaf and Hard of Hearing directory. If you would like to be included please contact us.

THE BOISE VALLEY HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Boise Valley Hearing Loss Association of America (formerly SHHH) meets the first Thursday of each month from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the conference room on the third floor at St. Luke's Medical Center in Meridian, 520 S. Eagle Road. For more information contact Debbie Bottles, President, at Boise ValleySHHH@aol.com

Boise Valley Deaf Club Announces the Third Annual Deaf and Hard-of- Hearing Fest

When: Saturday, March 25, 2006

Where: Hatch Ballroom of Student Union
Building at Boise State University

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Guest Speakers and workshops

Contact Ginny at

www.boisevalleydeafclub.org

More Announcements

National Cued Speech Association and The Deaf Children's Literacy Project

Invites you to participate in workshops where you will discover how deaf children can learn the building blocks of English.

Workshop Title: Introduction to cued American English

Beyond the Basics of cued American English

Where: St. Luke's Meridian Medical Center (520 S. Eagle Road, Meridian, ID)

When: April 21-22, 2006

Time: 9-4

Contact: Susie Jones via email: sjones@ierh.org

**Intermountain Special Study
Institute On Deafness**

ISSI 2006

June 19-22

**Idaho State University
Pocatello, Idaho**

**Registration starts April 1, 2006
(208) 282-2213 for information**

Contact www.isu.edu/issi



SAVE THE DATE:

What: 12 Annual Walter Knox Memorial Hospital Health and Safety Fair

Where: Walter Knox Memorial Hospital 1202 E. Locust Emmett, Idaho

When: Saturday May 20, 2006

Come and see our display booth

IRID ANNOUNCEMENT

**Alaska RID is proud to host Region V Conference April 27-April 30, 2006
Anchorage, Alaska**

**Hotel Information: The Hilton Hotel of Anchorage
500 West Third Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
1-907-272-7411**

For more information go to www.ridregionv.org

More announcements

IAD ANNOUNCEMENT

IAD is planning to celebrate its 75th and ISDB's 100th Anniversary on
August 3-6, 2006
at Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind, Gooding Idaho
For more information go to www.idahodeaf.org

Lori Voigt, CART reporter is now
captioning "Newsmakers" which airs on
Sunday mornings at 8:00 on Channel 6.

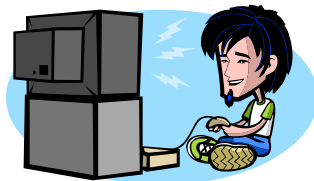
IDAHO CHAPTER OF AG BELL

Pam Vannoy

The newly forming Idaho Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell (AG Bell) Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing plans to launch its new chapter status in its first month of existence, with a one day conference, April 7, 2006. Featured speaker will be Dave Sindrey, respected author and certified AVT. This conference is to increase public awareness regarding AG Bell, and to educate parents and professionals in the field of hearing health care and deaf education, who work with oral deaf or hard of hearing children in Idaho.

The purpose of this chapter is to advocate for listening, learning, talking and living independently with hearing loss. Membership in this chapter consists of parents and families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, professionals in the field of hearing health care and deaf education, as well as oral deaf adults who are dedicated to keeping the oral option alive in Idaho. We will hold annual conferences, activities throughout the year to encourage interactions and cohesiveness between families, and those who work with the deaf, and to network and lobby to promote the oral option.

For more information regarding the conference or chapter, please contact Chapter President, Pam Vannoy (208) 939-3321.



CDHH HAS NEW VIDEOPHONES

Come in anytime to learn how to use them and make calls.

Just call us first to make sure we are in the office.

We have a D-Link and a VP-100.

IP Address: 168.103.42.178

VP#: 208-334-0879

TTY: 208-334-0803

**CDHH supports all technology for Deaf/HOH people and does not endorse any specific companies.*

Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
1720 Westgate Drive
Boise, Idaho 83704

Meeting Schedule FY 2006

Next Council Meeting:

Friday, April 28, 2006
9:00 a.m. 1720 Westgate Drive, Suite D
Room 119.

Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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Dirk Kempthorne
Governor

Steven Stubbs

Mary Reis

Co-Chairpersons

Wes Maynard, Executive Director

Cindy Schreiner, Editor

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